

Q. After a long day on the lake last weekend, I noticed that my daughter's eyes were red and slightly swollen. The next day, things seemed to return to normal, so we didn't seek treatment. What could have caused her red eyes?

A. Long days on the lake can be very relaxing and a lot of fun. However, it's days like these that pose big threats to your eyes' health. Consider these potential hazards, and their simple solutions, before your next lake outing.

No day at the lake is complete without sunshine, and lots of it. However, with sun comes ultraviolet radiation. It seems as though everyone remembers their sunscreen, but what about the sunscreen for your eyes? Good quality sunglasses should be worn by everyone in the family to reduce the risk of eye disease and "sunburn of the eyes," known as exposure keratitis.

Another potential hazard is the water itself. While our area lakes are clean and beautiful, they're not exactly sterile. And when the potential for infection is present, the eye is especially susceptible. Bacterial or viral infections of the eye (pink eye) are more likely after exposure to lake water. Preventative measures include limiting contact, by wearing goggles or keeping your eyes out of the water, and/or using sterile eye drops to rinse your eyes after getting out of the water. If, despite these efforts, you experience persistent blurry vision, redness, and/or mucous discharge, see your eye doctor right away.

As with most things, a little common sense goes a long way when it comes to eye health on the water. If the need arises, though, Carolina Eye Care's after-hours and emergency service is here for you anytime!